SERMON FOR SUNDAY.

A Scholarly Discourse By Rev. D. H. Overton

Subject: "God's Obligation to Man."

Brooklyn, N. Y.—The Rev. Daniel H. Overton, pastor of the Syrian Avenue Reformed Church, preached Sunday night in the Sherbrick Avenue Reformed Church at the union services with His own congregation. The subject was, "God's Obligation to Man." The text was from II. Timothy, i. 9: "Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, n.t according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ b. ..re times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Mr. Overton said:

There is the law of God and there is the gospel of God. Often have I spoken of the law of God, now I would speak of the gospel of law. The law of God may be defined as that which expresses man's obligation to man. The Old Testament and the New Testament unite in this, that they give not only the law of God, but the gospel of God. It is this fact that makes the Hebrew religion and the Christian religion absolute from all the other religions of the world. Many other religions give plenty of directions to the law of God, but none of them gives the gospel of God; they define not the obligation of God to man. The gospel of the human race finds a place in the Hebrew nation were of such a nature that they came to appreciate and pleased by worship and sacrifice the revelation of man as they were informent and crush mas. The law of the gods must be obeyed, but only their man might escape the punishment of the gods, and not from any particular love of man for the man.

It is strange how this treatment conception of the gods has even entered the thought of so many about the time of Jesus Christ. He, too, in the thought of many is a God that must be appeased by acts of worship and sacrifice or He will punish and torment and crush man. Such is not the gospel of God or perish by them. This is, according to the gospel of grace. God said that sinners. It said die. Men came and sin thoughtlessly. Man is responsible to God, and under obligations to Him to yield to His will. Herewill. We must remember, too, we are far away from the ideal of God's character if we must not stop with this thought. If we do we will have only a partial view of God—so will have only a heather god.

And if we have only a partial God we heathen go", then we shall have only a partial or heathen religion. If fear is our only motive in religion we cannot worship God aright. We worship will be for the purpose of escaping the wrath of an angry God, and it will find expression in our attempts to appease and please Him, in many God-like propitiations and atonements, and sacrifices, and servile obedience to His law. We must rise above fear, and even above the thought of future rewards, to love, and to the thought of loving service, and present reward in doing something to hasten the coming of God's kingdom upon the earth. We must have a more just estimation of man to God, as expressed by law, and think of obligation of God to man as expressed by the gospel of love. We must think of the gospel of God as a covenant making and a covenant keeping God, loving man and doing all that infinite love can do for man's salvation. Says Dr. Abbott: "The Old Testament is the gospel of the obligation of God to man in the bud; the New Testament is the gospel of God' obligation to man in the flower.

There is no doubt, I think, about the fact of God's obligation to man. It is really the central fact of the Old and New Testament alike. It is the very gospel of God in His great book from beginning to end. I might also interpret that book aright.

But before we boast of that gospel, or pride ourselves that God is under obligations to us, let us seek to know the ground of that obligation. Let us know that we have no right to put God under an obligation to us by anything we have done. Not according to our works, but according to His own purposes and grace. Paul says in the text. It is therefore God's own purpose and active love, for grace is love in action, that has put God under obligation to man. God so loved" —and there it all began—this gospel of God's obligation to man. God so loved that He voluntarily and out of His active love, and for no other reason, placed Himself under obligation to the whole world of humanity, so that whosoever in that world would believe in that love, and would let God fulfil His obligation toward him, should not perish, but be saved. This is John iii:16, in the light of our text and in the words of our theme. This is the gospel that Jesus Christ came to proclaim to the world—